

Making Dream Surfaces Attainable

INSTALLATION

Natural stone has a reputation for being one of the most luxurious home design materials with its various pattern, texture and color options truly making it stand out in any room.

PREPARE

Step 1 – Measure Twice

Measure the dimensions of the area you wish to tile, and then figure the square feet of the area. Order an additional 5% to 10% of the stone to allow for cutting and waste.

Step 2 – Clean Surface Thoroughly & Prep

Whether applying natural stone to floors or walls, it is imperative that you start with a clean, dry surface. For flooring, when installing on a concrete slab, clean the area thoroughly with a wet sponge to remove any stubborn dirt or grime. For installation over wood

sub-floors, make sure the area is free from dirt and grime. Install stone tiles to walls by first attaching a 1/4" tile backer board (or what your building code requires) with adhesive and screws every 6 inches both vertically and horizontally.

INSTALL

Step 1 – Measure and Find Center

You want the natural stone that you install to radiate outwards from the center of the room rather than starting abruptly from one of the walls. In order to achieve this effect you need to draw a reference line on the surface of the underlayment. Find the center of two opposing

walls and use a line chalk to draw a path in between them. Then measure to the center of that line, and use a T-Square to make an intersecting chalk path to the other two opposite walls.

Step 2 – Preview Tile and Set Permanently

After determining the center of the room with the reference lines, you can begin to experiment with a layout design.

Starting at the center of the room and working your way outward, lay down one row of tile along the reference line. Blend and adjust the tile placement until you achieve an optimal look.

To continue the installation process spread the thin-set on one tile and place it where desired. Repeat this process, working with one tile at a time, until you reach the wall.

To keep the placement straight, use the reference lines as a guide. Also, use tile spacers to keep the layout consistent, as well as create uniform grout lines

Once you have decided on the tile layout, mix the adhesive, also called mortar or thin-set, that is recommended for your tile. Follow the manufacturer's directions for preparing the adhesive.

Once you reach the wall, take note of any odd angles or gaps that require custom cut pieces.

Using a notched trowel, apply thin-set to a small area on the floor for installation. Use the notched edge of the trowel to create grooves in the thin-set. Creating grooves will increase the strength of the adhesive.

Continue the tile installation by returning to the center point and laying out the second row of tile adjacent to the first.

Step 3 – Measure Twice, Cut Once

In most natural stone installations you will need custom cut pieces in order to stretch the floor out to meet the walls. You will also need to fit tiles around architectural features in the room, as well as permanent appliances and equipment. The way to do this is with the use of a wet saw. Carefully measure and make a straight line with a

pencil on stone tiles prior to cutting.

If a wet saw is unable to make a specific cut, use a 4-inch grinder to cut curves, cutouts or hard to reach angles. Wipe any moisture from the tiles and install.

Step 4 – Wait 24 Hours Before Proceeding to step 5

Step 5 – Mix & Apply Grout

Mix grout according to manufacturer's directions. Never use sanded grout for natural stone surfaces. Mix slowly until you reach a creamy consistency that remains fairly stationary on your grout float. Apply the grout to the grout joint only. Avoid smearing grout over the entire surface of the tile. Allow to dry the recommended period (often not too long) before wiping grout off the surface. Do not wait too long – if the grout dries too much, it will make cleanup much more difficult.

Fill a bucket with warm clean water and dampen a sponge to clean the excess grout away from the grout lines. Do not gouge or wash out the grout. Clean the entire surface with water, repeating as necessary to remove all grout from the tops of the tiles.

Step 6 – Wait 24 Hours to Apply Sealer

After you've allowed your grout to dry for 24 hours, make sure the surface is clean and free of dirt. Apply a tile sealer, made specifically for natural stone, according to manufacturer's instructions. Apply as

many coats as it takes until the stone and the grout stops absorbing the sealer.